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“Many spa designs in the future will consist of widespread buildings with a few common areas”

Alberto Apostoli, founder, Studio Apostoli

After the pandemic, every spa will have to make some changes, and in fact many have already done so. A complete checkup of the ventilation system is mandatory. If possible, they should equip the structure with automatic doors, taps, dryers etc. It would be helpful to eliminate or coat those surfaces that are difficult to clean.

Some aesthetically pleasing partitions should be placed in the relaxation areas. Encourage, where possible, the use of outdoor areas, and think of re-sizing some areas where possible. The ventilation plant must be easy to inspect and maintain. Dark corners can give guests doubts about hygiene, so lighting design becomes important. Choosing light colours for surfaces will also help; it's important to choose the right materials and construction techniques. Avoid grouting floors; instead, use easy-to-clean, non-porous materials, as well as new antimicrobial finishes such as those that feature silver



ions. Better signage can help with guest flow and provide reassurance. The important thing is that it is creative, almost fun – we shouldn't make guests feel like they're in a hospital.

Where space allows, many spa designs in the future will consist of widespread buildings, with a few common areas and many private small buildings that can be reserved.

But spas have always been places for socialising – it has always been this way throughout history, with the Romans even going to the spa to do business. We certainly will see private spas in some houses or hotel suites, but the spa as we understand it is a place where you can meet other people and socialise, perhaps with just a smile or a glance.

So, if you ask me what a spa will look like tomorrow or in 10 years, I will answer: the same as in the last two thousand years. ■ Based in Italy, architect Alberto Apostoli is founder of Studio Apostoli. www.studioapostoli.com